

Brussels Sprouts with Bacon Sauce

Ontario-grown Brussels sprouts are a tasty addition to meals during the fall. Before cooking sprouts, trim stems and outer leaves. Cut an "X" in the base to ensure even cooking. Top Brussels sprouts with this creamy bacon sauce and you'll elevate them to gourmet status.

1 lb fresh Brussels sprouts
1 cup water
4 slices bacon
1 small onion, chopped
1/2 cup sour cream
1 tbsp flour
1/8 tsp salt
dash pepper

Remove any discolored leaves, trim stem ends and wash. Cut an "X" in the base of each sprout. Bring water to boil in saucepan. Boil or steam sprouts, covered for 10 minutes, until tender crisp. Cook bacon until crisp; remove from pan and drain. Remove all but 1 tbsp of fat from the pan; add chopped onion and sauté until tender, about 5 minutes. Combine sour cream, flour, salt and pepper. Stir sour-cream mixture into sautéed onion; add crumbled bacon and heat sauce through.

When sprouts are tender crisp, drain well and top with sauce and serve. Makes 4 to 5 servings.

Creamy Baked Cabbage

This recipe blends the richness of sour cream and the mild flavor of buttered cabbage in an oven-baked casserole.

1 small head cabbage, about 1 lb (8 cups shredded)
1/4 cup butter
1 medium onion, chopped
1 tsp paprika
1/2 tsp salt
1/4 tsp pepper
1/2 cup sour cream
1/4 cup fine, dry bread crumbs
1/4 cup grated Parmesan cheese

Shred cabbage. Melt butter in large skillet and sauté onion until tender, 5 to 10 minutes. Add cabbage and toss with melted butter until cabbage is well coated. Sprinkle paprika, salt and pepper over cabbage; blend in. Stir in sour cream. Combine bread crumbs and cheese; sprinkle over cabbage mixture. Bake covered at 160°C (325°F) for 25 minutes. Makes 6 servings.



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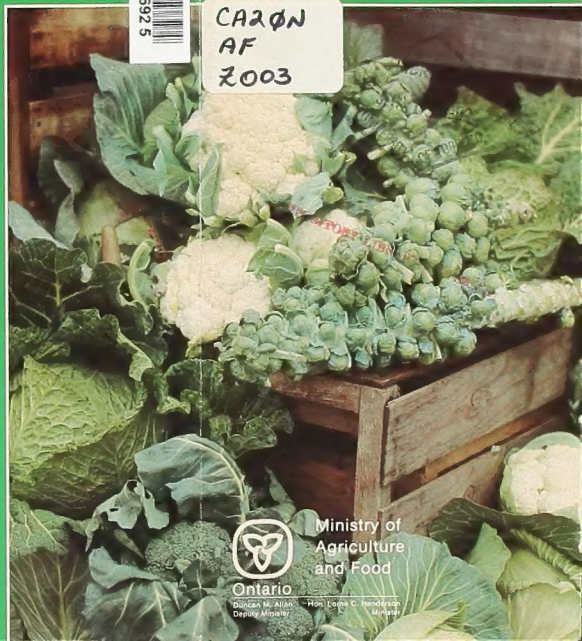


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Ontario Cole Crops

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Ontario

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Ontario Cole Crops

Fall harvesttime in Ontario is the season for a great variety of fresh, colorful vegetables. Among some of the finest are the cole crops — broccoli, Brussels sprouts, cabbage and cauliflower. They're available fresh from midsummer until frost and some from storage into the winter.

Cole crops are very versatile vegetables. You can take advantage of their delicious flavor in so many ways. Bake, steam, sauté or stir-fry. Enjoy their bright color in salads, vegetable platters, casseroles and soups. Serve cauliflower and broccoli, raw and crunchy, with a variety of dips.

TO CHOOSE

With its attractive color and superb fresh flavor, broccoli is a favorite fall vegetable. Look for broccoli that's bright with tender-firm stalks and compact green heads. Avoid broccoli with yellow-speckled buds and wilted leaves as it's past its prime. When choosing Brussels sprouts, look for firm, compact heads with fresh-looking leaves. Choose sprouts similar in size so they'll cook evenly. Choose cabbage with fresh-looking leaves and a compact head. With cauliflower, look for creamy white heads of tightly closed clusters of flowers and fresh green outer leaves.

TO STORE

With all fresh vegetables, including cole crops, it's important to take care. Ideally they need a cool, moist area for storage. To store cabbage and cauliflower, just cut a thin slice off the stalk. For cauliflower, leave the outer leaves attached and store as is in the refrigerator. Place cabbage, Brussels sprouts and broccoli in plastic bags before storing in the refrigerator.

TO COOK

When properly cooked, cole crops are mild and delicately flavored — not strong and overpowering. The flavors are at their best if the vegetables are cooked in a small amount of water for a minimum amount of time. It isn't necessary to cover them completely with water during cooking. If you do not wish to boil them, these vegetables are excellent when steamed, until tender crisp.

Cream of Broccoli Soup

Broccoli should be quickly cooked until the tender crisp stage to retain its fresh flavor and bright green color. This applies also when preparing rich Cream of Broccoli Soup. Be careful not to overcook.

- 1 bunch **broccoli**, about 1-1/2 lb (8 cups flowerettes and stalks)
- 2 tbsp butter
- 1 small onion, chopped
- 1 stalk celery, chopped
- 2 cups chicken bouillon
- 3 tbsp butter
- 3 tbsp flour
- 2 cups milk
- 3/4 tsp salt
- 1/4 tsp pepper

Trim and wash broccoli; cut into flowerettes, chop stalks.

Melt two tbsp butter in saucepan. Add onion and celery; sauté until tender, about 10 minutes. Add broccoli stalks to onion. Pour chicken bouillon over vegetables; cover and simmer 5 minutes. Add flowerettes and continue cooking 10 minutes. Remove pan from heat and purée vegetables and bouillon in blender. Melt remaining butter in pan. Stir in flour; cook, stirring, 5 minutes. Pour in milk, add seasonings; cook, stirring over medium heat until sauce thickens and bubbles. Combine broccoli purée with sauce and heat through. Makes 6 servings.

Beefy Cabbage Stew

Shredded or chopped cabbage is a welcome addition to soups and stews. To shred cabbage, cut the head into quarters and remove the core. Then thinly slice each quarter with a sharp knife.

- 1 lb ground beef
- 1 large onion, chopped
- 2 medium potatoes, peeled and diced (about 2 cups)
- 3 medium carrots, peeled and chopped (about 1-1/2 cups)
- 1 can (28-oz) tomatoes
- 1 can (5-1/2-oz) tomato paste
- 2 cups water
- 1 bay leaf
- 1-1/2 tsp salt
- 1/2 tsp pepper
- 1/2 tsp Worcestershire sauce
- 1 small head **cabbage**, about 1 lb (8 cups chopped)

Brown ground beef in Dutch oven or heavy casserole. Remove beef from pan; drain off all but 2 tbsp fat. Add onion; sauté until tender, about 5 minutes. Add potatoes and carrots and cook 3 minutes in fat. Return ground beef to pan. Add tomatoes, tomato paste, water, bay leaf, salt, pepper, and Worcestershire; mix together, breaking up tomatoes. Cover and simmer stew gently for 40 minutes. Remove bay leaf, add chopped cabbage and simmer an additional 45 minutes. Makes 8 servings.

Stir-Fry Fall Vegetables

Fall vegetables are ideal in stir-fry dishes which capture their bright colors and crisp texture. Add them in any combination but remember to add the ones which require longest cooking first.

- 1 small head **cauliflower**, about 1 lb (2 cups flowerettes)
- 1 bunch **broccoli**, about 1-1/4 lb (2 cups flowerettes)
- 2 medium onions, cut in wedges
- 1/2 lb fresh mushrooms, about 2 cups sliced
- 2 tsp vegetable oil
- 3/4 tsp salt
- 1/2 cup chicken stock
- 2 tsp cornstarch
- 2 tsp soy sauce
- 2 tsp white vinegar
- 1/8 tsp ground ginger

Cut flowerettes of cauliflower into 1/4-in. slices. To prepare broccoli, cut stalks in thin slices or use later in soups and leave flowerettes whole. Heat oil and salt in large electric frypan or wok to 190°C (375°F). Add cauliflower slices, tossing with two wooden spoons in a continual motion; cook 2 minutes. Add broccoli and onion; continue cooking, stirring and tossing, for 5 minutes. Add mushrooms and cook, stirring, another 3 minutes.

Combine remaining ingredients. Pour into bottom of wok or center of pan; stir until mixture thickens and bubbles. Thoroughly mix with vegetables and cook 2 minutes longer. Serve immediately. Makes 6 servings.

Cheese-Topped Cauliflower

This recipe is an elegant variation of the popular cauliflower with cheese sauce, and it's easy to prepare. The cheese sauce has a hint of mustard, and extra cheddar topping bubbles and browns.

- 1 medium head **cauliflower**, about 1-1/2 lb
- 1 cup water
- 2 tsp butter
- 2 tsp flour
- 1/2 tsp salt
- 1/4 tsp pepper
- 1/2 tsp dry mustard
- 1-1/4 cups milk
- 1-1/4 cups grated cheddar cheese, about 4-oz

Trim and wash cauliflower; divide into flowerettes. Bring water to a boil in saucepan and add cauliflower. Boil or steam, covered, for 12 to 15 minutes, until tender crisp. To make sauce, melt butter in a heavy saucepan and add flour. Cook, stirring, for 5 minutes. Blend in seasonings, milk and 1 cup grated cheese. Reserve remaining 1/4-cup cheese for topping. Cook over medium heat stirring, until sauce is thick and smooth.

When cauliflower is cooked, place in ovenproof dish; pour sauce over cauliflower. Top with remaining 1/4 cup cheese and broil 3 to 5 minutes or until golden. Makes 6 servings.